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INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 6085
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 3404
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 7256
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 4520
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 1785
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 1820
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 3999
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 4420
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 8989
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC
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STATE FOR WHA/AND P.FRENCH AND L.PETRONI
NSC FOR D. FISK

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ECON](#) [BL](#)
SUBJECT: CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY STALEMATE CONTINUES

REF: A. LA PAZ 2415

[1](#)B. LA PAZ 2418

[1](#)1. (U) Most political and media analysts describe the regional September 8 strike as a success (see September 8 ASDAR), but the Constituent Assembly remains deadlocked, at least for the moment, over whether delegates should use a simple majority or two-thirds vote to approve constitutional changes. Organizers of the strike, who favor a two-thirds vote, declared a "truce" September 9 but will reevaluate their position on September 14 if the MAS continues to insist on a simple majority. The Assembly's governing board will resume negotiations September 11 to be followed by a meeting of Assembly party leaders September 12, just before the plenary resumes session.

[1](#)2. (SBU) One opposition Assembly delegate told us he is sanguine regarding the negotiations, but said that the GOB, which has kept MAS delegates on a short leash, "will have to give." The GOB said September 10 that it is willing to change the rules of order in partial response to opposition demands; nonetheless, there has been no change in the MAS position on a simple majority. President Morales said September 9 that "absolute majority is democracy," and that "in indigenous communities, majorities and minorities don't exist, but consensus." He again argued that the two-thirds vote mentioned in the Assembly's enabling legislation refers only to a one-time vote on the final constitution, not to its individual provisions. (Note: The enabling legislation is in fact ambiguous on this point. End note). Morales added if the final two-thirds vote fails, the GOB will take the new constitution directly to the people for their approval.

[1](#)3. (SBU) National Unity (UN) leader Samuel Doria Medina has told the Ambassador that opposition and MAS delegates had worked over the weekend in an effort to craft a compromise. While no deal was reached, Doria Medina was optimistic that a deal could be worked out if both sides were prepared to be "creative."

[1](#)4. (SBU) Comment: News reports showing more prosperous Santa Cruz youth preventing poor indigenous residents from working September 8 are not likely to engender sympathy for the

opposition's cause, particularly in the Altiplano. For now, a stalemate persists between the MAS and the opposition. Still, the strike ended after 24 hours and negotiations continue, leaving some room for cautious optimism. End comment.
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